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## **Variation and Composition Principles of the Residence Group (band) of the Mbuti Pygmies – beyond a typical/atypical dichotomy**

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**ABSTRACT** 1) Two models concerning the residence group (or band) of the Mbuti pygmies, a territorial model and a patrilocal model, which have been presented so far to explain the general patterns of the Mbuti socio-residential arrangements, are criticised, since both of them take little account of the complicated backgrounds of Mbuti subsistence, and thus have too narrow a view of the variation of the Mbuti's residence group. 2) The variation of the residence group is analysed referring to its socio-economic background, and it is concluded that the small- or large-sized groups that have been regarded atypical so far become worth consideration when we take a wider view of the Mbuti's subsistence, and to fail to do so would be to greatly oversimplify our observations of their life-style. 3) The composition structure of the residence group which intrinsically contains flexibility is analysed. Three social relations, i.e. *deu*, *bodé*, and *adi* (patrilateral kinship, affinal relation, and matrilineal kinship, respectively), connect the members of the residence group with one another and thus make up the residence group which is characterized by cooperation and generalized reciprocity among the members. Although the *deu* is most dominant relationship, other two categories play no little part, entitling the Mbuti to stay with their affines or maternal kindred freely. This gives definite flexibility to the composition of the Mbuti's residence group. 4) The seeming applicability of the patrilocal band model is discussed. It is suggested that the symbiotic relationship between the Mbuti and the neighboring farmers is one of the effective causes of the tendency of patrilineal and patrilocal grouping of the Mbuti.

### **INTRODUCTION**

The residential group or band of the Mbuti hunter-gatherers has been one of the central concerns among students who did fieldwork in the Ituri forest (Fig. 1). Although every researcher agrees that the band is a basic unit of socio-political as well as local organization of the Mbuti, there is remarkable discrepancies in opinions on the nature of the band. One ethnographer claims that the band is quite a fluid social grouping and has nothing to do with any kinship structure, while some others maintain that the band contains a core patrilineal kin group and virilocal residence associated with band exogamy is a prevailing rule. Here we have something like a popular anthropological controversy of many years on the applicability of a patrilocal band model and a flexible ecological model to the hunting and gathering societies. Does this mean that there is a misunderstanding on either side of the two parties probably due to the observation of atypical bands, or that we should change our attention from a typical model construction to the variety of the Mbuti residence grouping and try to understand the variability itself? Reviewing the variability of Bushman band society, Guenther (1985) definitely suggests the latter approach: "Defining the band in terms of only one of its manifestations has limited heuristic or analytical merit as it leaves unexplained and unexplainable all of the types that don't fit (which then have to fall into some frustrating residual category, such as

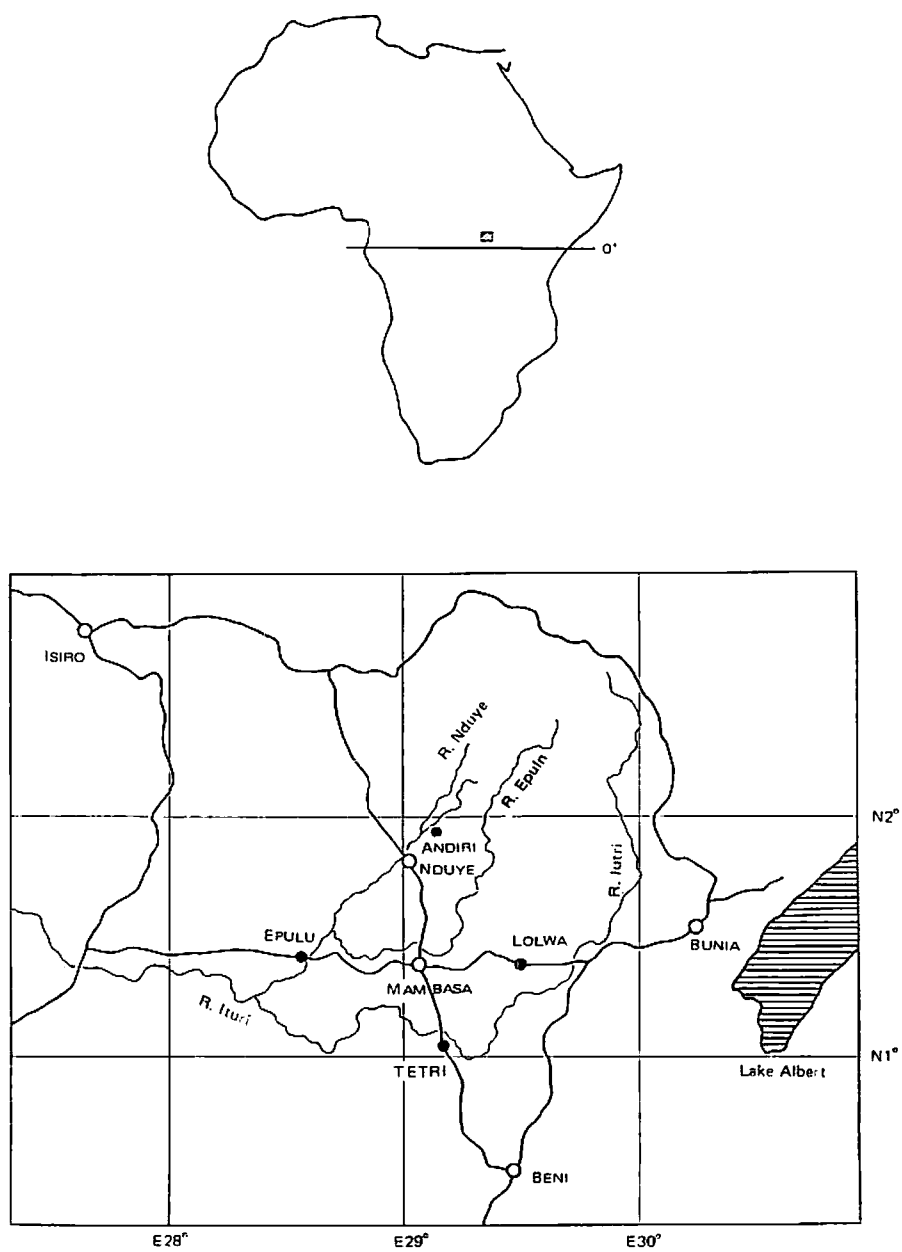


Fig. 1. Ituri area

"composite" or "anomalous", as were postulated by Steward and Service)."

I conducted research into the residence groups of Mbuti (Efe)<sup>1)</sup> archers in Andiri Locality in 1978-79 and 1983, and have come to have the same idea as Guenther's, thinking it makes no sense to consider a certain kind of Mbuti socio-residential arrangements as typical and others as atypical, since the typical band model is made on the assumption of 'pure hunting and gathering subsistence' which is actually an illusion. In this article I will present the variation and composition principles of the residence group of the Mbuti, taking into account their complicated subsistence mode on the basis of my own data on Andiri archers as well as making comparisons with the data on other Mbuti groups, and make some discussion on a seeming applicability of the patrilocal band model to the residence groups of the Mbuti.

### EPULU MODEL VS. TETRI MODEL, AND A NEW ORIENTATION

First of all I describe here briefly two distinct models which have been presented so far to explain the general patterns of the Mbuti socio-residential arrangements. One model is offered by Turnbull who chiefly studied the Mbuti net-hunters in Epulu. He claims it is territorial characters rather than social characters that define the band. "It is undoubtedly territory that gives the band its identity as such and enables that identity to persist, and it is to his territory, as to his age group, rather than to any kin group, that an Mbuti owes allegiance" (Turnbull 1965: 116) and "it certainly indicates that the band as a whole in no way and at no time resembles a patrilineage in its composition" (ibid. : 99). The net-hunter groups studied by J. Hart may have some resemblance with this model as they "do not have rigid affiliations with particular lineages, and their constituency changes frequently" (Hart 1978: 327). The other model is offered by Tanno (1976) and Ichikawa (1978) who conducted their researches on the Mbuti net-hunters in Tetri. They maintain that the Mbuti band is built up by a core patrilineal group which is a exogamous unit and observes viripatrilocal residence, although the realization of an exact patrilocal band is disturbed by the acceptance of uxormatrilocality and avunculocality. They maintain that the Epulu band is an "exception" (Ichikawa 1978: 182) or "unique" (Tanno 1976: 133) which was largely influenced by the existence of the Putnam camp, who built a hotel and hospital in Epulu and attracted many Mbuti from every direction of the forest, which explains why the Epulu band had such a large size (ca. 25 families) and complicated composition.

In my previous papers (Terashima 1983, 1984) I offered almost the same view as that of Tanno and Ichikawa about Andiri archer bands, on the basis of the observation made during the first survey in 1978-79.<sup>2)</sup> That is, I found it was not the Epulu model but the Tetri model that was applicable to Andiri archers. However, after my second visit in 1983, I began to feel the need to change our model-oriented thought. That was not because the seeming patrilocal band grouping had disappeared nor the Epulu band model became to seem more applicable, but because it became clear that both models had the same shortcoming of neglecting some variations of the Mbuti's residence group. Researchers were too hasty, I think, in presenting generalized models and were uninterested in analysing the variety of the residence group, so that they have too narrow a scope for the variability of the Mbuti's residence group. But the most important character of the group organization of hunter-gatherers rests on its variability and flexibility (Guenther 1985).

Why, then, did the researchers neglect some varieties of Mbuti residence groups thinking of them only as atypical ones? One of the most probable reasons, I think, is their

limited view of the complicated subsistence mode of the Mbuti, especially the influence of the farmers on the subsistence and residence patterns of the Mbuti. Wilmsen (1983) criticizes the 'illusion' of some recent ecological anthropologists who, placing so much value on 'pure hunting and gathering subsistence', wanted to see it in the Kalahari hunter-gatherers of past and today, while disregarding the long history of multi-ethnic socio-economic settings in Kalahari and the variability of their subsistence mode. Some of the bias for the 'pure hunter-gatherers' seems to have been shared by Mbuti researchers, too.

It is quite evident that, since the beginning of the immigration of savanna farmers into the Ituri forest, the Mbuti have not been living as pure hunter-gatherers. Although they certainly have been doing hunting and gathering, their foraging life has been built up on an economic exchange and symbiotic relationship with the sedentary agricultural neighbors (Hart 1978; Ichikawa 1983, 1985; Peacock 1984; Terashima 1985; Waehle 1985; Bailey in press). But Turnbull (1961, 1965), who claims repeatedly the primary value of the forest for the economic as well as socio-religious life of the Mbuti, gives only negative value to the villagers or the village life of the Mbuti, although his books, despite the author's explicit statements, eloquently suggest the significance of the latter. On the other hand, the researchers who conducted their work from an ecological viewpoint acknowledge the importance of the Mbuti-farmer symbiosis, but they focus their attention on the hunting-gathering subsistence, and the hunting-gathering band. They do not take into account the symbiosis when considering the socio-residential arrangements of the Mbuti (Harako 1976; Tanno 1976; Ichikawa 1978; Terashima 1984).

The subsistence activities of the Mbuti are classified into two large categories: 1) foraging in the forest 2) working in or around the village. In the former category, have been included what are regarded as typical activities of hunter-gatherers, such as hunting of wild game, gathering of wild plants, honey collecting, fishing, gathering of termites or caterpillars, and so forth. Included in the second category are various kind of services in and around the village: for example, helping villagers clear the forest for planting domestic foods, helping village women do domestic chores such as fetching water and firewood, cooking, and nursing infants, and bringing some forest materials such as Marantaceae leaves for thatching roofs, doing errands for villagers, dancing for entertaining the farmers as well enjoying themselves, etc. The Mbuti get domestic vegetable foods such as cassavas and plantains in exchange for providing services to the villagers. Foraging in the forest provides the Mbuti with wild foods such as game meat, honey, fish, fruits and nuts, etc., but the Mbuti do not consume all of the food by themselves; some of it is given to the villagers in exchange for domestic food or only as a gift. Ichikawa (1983, 1985) demonstrates that even net-hunting, which is one of the most effective hunting methods, barely sustains the Mbuti without the exchange of game meat for domestic vegetable foods. In relation to archers, Bailey (in press) reports that nearly two-thirds (63.5%) of the total calories consumed in 33 Mbuti camps were supplied by agricultural food. From these reports it is evident that we have to pay full attention to the symbiotic relationship between the Mbuti and the farmers when we analyse the subsistence and residence patterns of the Mbuti. Each variation of subsistence and residence pattern should be studied in that wider context. In this paper, I will first examine the variation of the residence group referring to its socio-economic backgrounds.

# VARIATION OF THE RESIDENCE GROUP AND ITS SOCIO-ECONOMIC BACKGROUNDS

By residence group I mean the group of people who live together in a camp.<sup>3)</sup> The residence group is a subsistence unit, independent of other residence groups in politics as well as economics.<sup>4)</sup> The voluntary cooperation of the members in subsistence activities and the distribution of food on the basis of generalized reciprocity make the residence group a distinct subsistence unit. The pattern of the residence group is naturally influenced by its subsistence way. The most important variable of the residence group as a subsistence unit is its size. The size of the residence group varies greatly from an extremely small one comprising only one family to such a large one that contains more than 25 families (Table 1, Fig. 2). Here I divide the groups into three sizes and analyse their socio-economic backgrounds and implications.

1) *the average or middle-sized groups.* Many of the residence groups recorded so far fall into the size of approximately 8 to 18 families among net-hunters, and 5 to 12 families among archers. The point of this level of grouping is that it holds the convenient number of male members for doing main collective hunting effectively, i.e. net-hunting among net-hunters and *mota* hunting among archers (Harako 1977: 209-10; Ichikawa 1978: 138-9; Terashima 1983: 83-4). Besides hunting, it can easily organize various task groups such as a honey-collecting team or nut-gathering team. Thus the residence group that continues foraging life deep in the forest is most likely to be on this level, and so far has been regarded

Table 1. Variation in the size of the residence group of the Mbuti.

Population (source)	Sizes of the groups recorded so far
<i>Archers</i>	
Andiri 78-79 (Terashima)	4 families (9 people), 5 (17), 6 (25), 10 (41), 13 (31)
Andiri 83 (Terashima)	3 (9), 3 (13), 4 (12), 6 (18) <sup>a</sup> , 7 (15), 7 (21) <sup>b</sup> , 7 (21), 7 (25) <sup>c</sup>
unknown (Turnbull 1965)	5, 6, 9, 10, 10, 11, 25
Lolwa 72-73 (Harako 1976)	8-12 (33-45) [av. 10 (39)]
Takuna/Paoni 82-83 (Waehle 1985)	4 (12), 5 (14), 5 (18), 12 (35)
<i>Net-hunters</i>	
Tetri 74-75 (Ichikawa 1978)	10 (47), 12 (48), 13 (55), 13 (ca. 72), 14 (53), 14 (79), 15 (67), 17 (77), 22 (ca. 94)
S. Ituri 73-75 (Hart 1978)	8 (24), 11 (46), 15 (48)
Epu 57-58 (Turnbull 1965)	3-9 [av. 6, when splitted], 22-26 [av. 24, when gathered]
unknown (Turnbull 1965)	8, 11, 13, 16, 18, 28
Lolwa 72-73 (Harako 1976)	5-10 (37-62) [av. 7.5 (44.5)]

Note: Groups a, b, c are not mentioned in the Table 1.  
The groups of one or two families are excluded from the list because of incompleteness of the data.

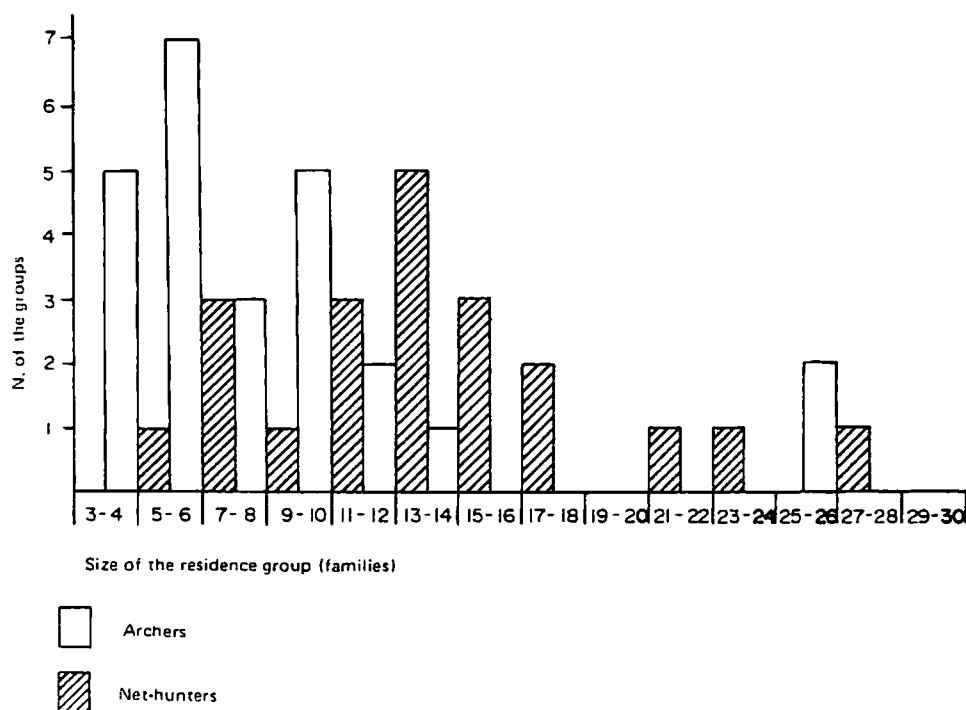


Fig. 2. Variation in the size of the residence group of the Mbuti.

as the typical grouping of the Mbuti. However, even the residence group of this level actually cannot do without the symbiotic relationship and the economic exchange with the farmers, relying on them for a large part of their calorific intake, as already mentioned. Therefore we cannot consider the residence group of this level to be most natural or ideal. As mentioned earlier, the works of ecological anthropologists were concentrated on this level of grouping, which lead them to the presentation of a somewhat modified patrilocal band model.

2) *the small-sized groups.* These are residence groups smaller than the level described above, which contain less than 7 families or so among net-hunters, and less than 4 families or so among archers. The residence group of this size has difficulty in organizing an effective hunting team by itself.<sup>5)</sup> So, they often join other groups when they go hunting. Among archers we often find small residence groups of this level in the vicinity of the village. When the Mbuti stay in a camp located near the village, they get a large part of their food from the villagers in exchange for various services and forest produce other than meat. Actually, they do not need to do so much hunting. When they have to go hunting, they usually can find some Mbuti who are willing to join them, since around the village there are usually some other residence groups close to each other. There sometimes are even such groups that contain only one family or so around the village. Their subsistence largely depends on the village food, supplemented by only small portions of wild food. They are not, however, isolated from other Mbuti groups, since on occasion they visit them and go to the forest together for hunting or other collective foraging. Some of such

minimal-sized groups build their residence inside of the village, just next to their village partners' houses or in the midst of their fields.

For honey collecting, only a small number of men, three or so, is enough. In the honey season, then, we find some small groups subsisting for a long time in the forest. This is also the season when some other forest foods, edible nuts and fruits such as wild yams, the fruit of *Canarium shweinfurthii*, the nuts of *Iringia gabonensis*, *I. robur*, *Treculia africana*, etc., become available in quantity and the Mbuti depend least on agricultural food. Ichikawa (1981: 62) reports that some Mbuti camps depended on honey for as much as 70% of their diet in weight or 80% in calories. The period of the honey season varies from year to year. Usually it continues for a couple of months, from June to September, while in the year of abundance,<sup>9)</sup> it continues for more than half a year.

The small-sized groups have been neglected so far since they are not full subsistence units from the viewpoint of pure hunting and gathering. However, if we recognize the symbiosis with the farmers as one of their subsistence strategies, they can be considered to be full subsistence units, and there is no reason to exclude them from the variation of the Mbuti's residence group.

The small-sized group has an advantage in the vicinity of the village. That is because each family unit of a residence group tends to become individualistic, since the Mbuti-farmer symbiotic partnership is in principle a one-to-one relationship, as will be discussed later. It becomes difficult for a large group to maintain food distribution on the basis of generalized reciprocity, and it tends to be divided into smaller groups (Turnbull 1965: 85-6; Bailey in press). This alternative ideology, individualism and generalized reciprocity, both of which are present in every residence group and work in different strength according to the socio-ecological settings in which the group exists, affects the residence grouping itself (cf. Ichikawa 1978: 177ff.). Although we do not have enough data to analyse here, investigation of the small group may bring us much insight into the adaptability and flexibility of the Mbuti's residence groups.

3) *the large-sized groups.* The number of residence groups that contain more than 13 families among archers, and 18 families among net-hunters is very small. This is because such a large group does not work well as a subsistence unit. The efficiency of collective hunting such as net-hunting is decreased as the group exceeds the convenient size (Harako 1977: 213), and, as mentioned above, it becomes difficult to maintain food distribution among the group on the basis of generalized reciprocity. Therefore the large-sized group, as well as the small-sized group, tends to be organized in the vicinity of villages where they can find special subsistence strategy to sustain such groups. We have two examples here. The residence group named Apekele 2 in Tetri comprised 25 families when it took up its residence near the village, but only a part of it (33 of 94 people) moved to the forest camps (Ichikawa 1978: 165). Camp Bapulai was a huge camp of archers near Lolwa village, which also seems to have contained nearly 25 families, but was divided into three subgroups in the forest (Harako 1976: 48). From an ecological viewpoint (Hayden 1981: 360), it appears difficult and is usually unprofitable to maintain such a large group in the forest.

It occasionally happens, however, in the forest that two groups take their residence close to each other and do some activities such as collective *mota* hunting together for some duration. This may be a way to reconcile the alternative needs, i.e. the need of cooperation of a large number of people and the need to keep effective small group for communal life. There may be a natural desire for a large gathering of friendly people who are related to one another by kinship or affinity, but its realization always depends on many other socio-ecological factors.



Table 2. Changes in the camp composition of the Andiri archers.

Family unit	husband's <i>acu</i>	husband's <i>muto-maia</i>	Camp Composition			accidents during 79-83	Camp Composition		
			near Andiri	in the forest			in the forest	near Andiri	
			Oct. 78	Oct. 78	Jan.-Feb. 79		Aug. 83	Oct. 83	Nov. 83
1. (F 1)	ADJ <sup>1)</sup>	Alu <sup>2)</sup>	V-1 <sup>3)</sup>	F-1	F-3	h. died	F-6	F-10	V-8
2. (F 6)	ADJ	Alu	V-1						V-6
4) 3. (F 7)	ADJ	Alu	V-1				F-5	F-8	V-6
4. (F 9)	ADJ	Alu	V-1	F-1			F-5	F-8	(a)
5. (F44)	ADJ	Alu	- <sup>5)</sup>	-			F-5	F-8	V-6
6. (F' 1)	ADJ	Pri	V-1	F-1	F-2	died	-	-	-
7. (F 2)	ADJ	Pri	V-1	F-1	F-3		F-5	F-9	V-6
8. (F45)	ADJ	Pri	V-1	F-1	F-3		F-5	F-8	V-6
9. (F 3)	ADJ	Pri	V-1			h. died	-	-	-
10. (F46)	ADJ	Pri	V-1	F-1	F-3		-	-	-
11. (F 8)	ADJ	Mas	V-1	F-1	F-3		-	-	-
12. (F 5)	AKM	Mbo	V-1	F-1	F-3		-	-	-
13. (F28)	AKM	Mbo	V-2	F-1	F-3	h&w died	-	-	-
14. (F29)	AKM	Mbo	V-2	F-1	F-3	h&w died	-	-	-
15. (F30)	ADF	Alu	V-2	F-1	F-3				(b)
16. (F 4)	ATC	Abe	V-1	F-1					(c)
17. (F47)	ATC	Bos	-	-	-		F-5	F-8	V-7
18. (F48)	AFR	Pri	-	-	-		F-5	F-9	(d)
19. (F20)	ATP	Gab	V-3				F-5	F-9	V-6
20. (F' 4)	ATP	Gab	V-3				F-5	F-9	V-6
21. (F21)	ATP	Ngu	V-3			w. died	F-5	F-8	V-7
22. (F23)	ATP	Pri	V-3				-	-	-
23. (F43)	ATP	Cho	-	-	-		F-5	F-8	V-7
24. (F22)	AMP	Dom	V-3			w. died	F-6	F-10	V-8
25. (F10)	AKF	Muf	V-4		-		F-6	F-10	V-8
26. (F11)	AKF	Muf	V-4		F-4		F-6	F-10	V-8
27. (F19)	AKF	Muf	V-4		-		F-6	F-10	V-8
28. (F27)	AKF	Muf	V-4		-		F-6	F-10	V-8
29. (F18)	AKF	Muf	V-4						V-9
30. (F12)	AKF	Zaa	V-4		F-4		F-7		V-9
31. (F13)	AKF	Zaa	V-4		F-4		F-7		V-9
32. (F41)	AKF	Zaa	V-4		F-4		F-7		(e)
33. (F42)	AKF	Zaa	V-4		F-4		-	-	-
34. (F26)	AKF	Zaa	V-5	F-2			-	-	(f)
35. (F14)	AKK	Use	V-4		F-4	h. died	F-7		V-9
36. (F15)	AKK	Mul	V-4		F-4	w. died	F-7		(g)
37. (F16)	AKK	Mul	V-4		-	h. died	-	-	-
38. (F17)	ABB	Obo	V-4		F-4		F-7		(h)
39. (F24)	ABB	Obo	V-5	F-2	F-4		F-7		V-10
40. (F25)	ABB	Obo	V-5	F-2			F-7		V-10
41. (F' 6)	ABB	Obo	V-5		F-4		F-7		V-10
42. (F' 7)	ABB	Obo	V-5	F-2	F-4	died	-	-	-

Notes. 1) abbreviation of a named patri kin group. 2) abbreviation of a farmer's name. 3) V: village camp, F: forest camp. F-2: termite collecting camp. F-1, 3, 4: hunting camps. F-5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10: honey collecting camps. 4) brothers. 5) absent from Andiri Locality.  
 (a), (b), (e), and (f) stayed in other village camps near Andiri. (d), (g), and (h) stayed in the village, next to their village partners' houses. (c) lived in the field of his village partner, with a few visitors.

Instead of pure hunting and gathering in the forest, there is a complicated subsistence mode. Both the small- and large-sized groups become worth consideration when we take a wider view of the Mbuti's subsistence, and to fail to do so would be to greatly oversimplify our observations of their life-style.

The choice of subsistence activities of a Mbuti changes according to the availability of wild food in the forest as well as domestic food in the village. The former varies over time and space, while the latter depends not only on the ecological factors, but also on the symbiotic relation he has with the farmers and this, in its turn, varies from person to person. Moreover, the choice depends on the relationships he has with other Mbutis. Therefore, every Mbuti has different socio-ecological backgrounds and subsistence strategies, and this changes from time to time. This may explain the variation of the Mbuti's residence group over time and space.

As almost every researcher has pointed out, the residence group of the Mbuti is characterized by the frequent change of its membership and the recurrence of fission-fusion of the group. The change of each residence group in Andiri is shown in Table 2. This fluidity of the residence group is based on the flexible composition principles of the residence group. Next, we will look into the composition structure that intrinsically contains the flexibility.

#### SOCIAL RELATIONS WHICH MAKE UP THE RESIDENCE GROUP

Despite the frequent change of membership, there are always some social relationships among the members of a residence group. In other words, every member has some relation to the rest of the group, which entitles his/her residence with them. When a Mbuti<sup>7)</sup> is asked about the connection with the residence group of which he is a member, he usually replies in three ways: 1) he stays with his *ácu*, 2) he stays with his *bódé*, 3) he stays with his *ádi*. These three Efé social categories mean patrilineal, affinal, and matrilineal relatives, respectively.<sup>8)</sup> Let us examine here the characteristic and ideological implications of these social categories and see how they connect group members in the actual composition of the residence group.

1) *ácu*. This means siblings and paternal parallel cousins in a narrow sense, but in a broadest sense it covers all of one's patrilineal relatives. There are a great number of named patrilineally related kin groups widely distributed in the forest. Although sometimes this kin group is called a lineage by researchers, that is misleading to some extent because the genealogical relationships among name group members are not always clear. The Mbuti have a shallow genealogical cognition like other African hunter-gatherers, usually up to two generations above. Thus first cousins can follow their genealogical relationship clearly, but when it comes to second cousins, the genealogy becomes uncertain in many cases. The kinship cognition of the Mbuti is fairly egocentric and in most cases not based on a specific common ancestor. Certainly, lineal descent ideology is not developed among the Mbuti as Turnbull (1965) forcefully maintains, but this does not mean that kinship has nothing to do with the Mbuti's social and residential grouping. Even when the genealogical relationship is vague, those who belong to the same name group recognize each other as *mácu* (my *ácu*), and this group works as a marriage control group, i.e., an exogamous unit.

The Mbuti think that they have a right to stay with their *ácu*, and also acknowledge a duty to reciprocate food sharing and gift-giving on the basis of generalized reciprocity.

Table 3. Social relationship in the residence group.

Population	Number of family units	Number of family units that stayed with . . .				
		<i>ácu</i> in a broad sense	<i>ácu</i> in a narrow sense	<i>bódé</i> <sup>1)</sup>	<i>ádi</i>	others
Andiri 78	39	33	21	7	1	2
Tetri 75 <sup>2)</sup>	131	119	94	21	27	0

Notes: 1) Only those who stayed with their wives' siblings were counted, and those who stayed with their sisters' husbands, who were also *bódé*, were omitted.

2) Source: Ichikawa 1978.

Thus it is quite natural that the people who are in *ácu* relationship live together. Now let us see the actual cases (Table 3). Among the Mbuti in Andiri in October 1978 (hereafter I use 'Andiri 78' to designate this population) there were 39 family units<sup>10)</sup> of which the men of 33 units (85%) lived with their male *ácu* in a broad sense. Among the net-hunters in Tetri in 1975 (hereafter this population is called 'Tetri 75') there were 130 family units, of which 119 (92%) stayed with their male *ácu*.<sup>11)</sup> The number of units which lived with *ácu* in a narrow sense, i.e. male sibling(s) or paternal first parallel cousin(s) is 21 (54%) in Andiri 78 and 94 (72%) in Tetri 75. That is to say, in Tetri 75, approximately 3 of 4 family units stayed with their male sibling(s) or first paternal parallel cousin(s). Thus it is clear that male siblings have a strong tendency to stay together, especially among Tetri net-hunters. Some residence groups were made up of almost only one sibling cluster, e.g. the bands named Bujumbra and Mawambo in Tetri 75. The sibling cluster is chiefly composed of male siblings, but female siblings are not excluded. Unmarried women, no matter how old they are, usually live with their siblings. Divorced women or widows with young children usually go back to their brothers' camps, where they stay until they get married again. Moreover, as I will show in the next section, we frequently find couples who live with their wives' brothers.

Although the sibling cluster has a strong tendency for aggregation, to stay with one's male sibling is a right, and not a duty. So, while we find some of the brothers always live together, there are usually other brothers who are absent from that residence group. This is one of the points which give the flexibility to the Mbuti's residence group. We can see some examples in the genealogy maps of the Andiri 78 (Fig. 3).

2) *bódé*. For a man, his wife's male *ácu*, or his sister's husband is his *bódé*.<sup>12)</sup> Thus *bódé* overlaps with *ácu*, and the right of co-residence and generalized reciprocity are extended naturally to *bódé*. It is true that the *bódé* relationship implies negative institutional aspects such as the strained relation caused by the request of bride-price or reciprocal sister exchange marriage, and the observation of avoidance relationship with his wife's parents. However, it also includes a positive emotional side. An especially strong and friendly relationship takes place between those who have exchanged sisters. This sister-exchange marriage, called *bódé-bódé* in Andiri (or *kusono* in Tetri), is the most preferable marriage pattern among the Mbuti. Almost half of the marriage of the couples

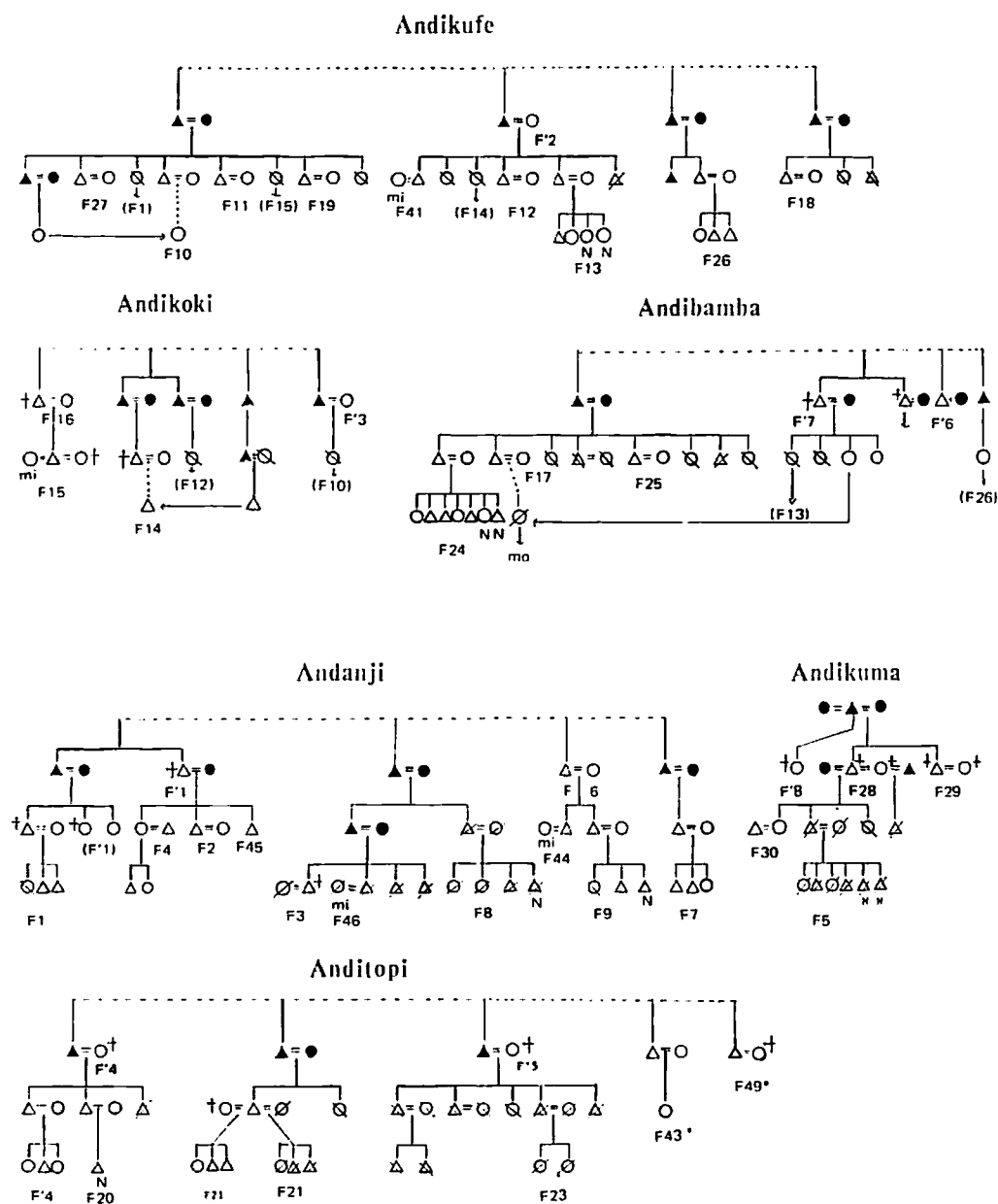


Fig. 3. Genealogical maps of the Mbuti (Efe) in Andiri.

Notes.

N: born during 1979-1983.

F: died during 1979-1983.

△: absent in 1978-79, and 1983.

△: present in 1978-79, but absent in 1983.

+: absent in 1978-79, but present in 1983.

mi: marrying-in.

mo: marrying-out.

in Andiri 78 were of this type.

The sister exchange marriage implies much consequences for residence grouping. The two couples who have made the sister exchange often live together. In such a case, if *ácu* of each couple live together with them, the residence group takes the form of the association of two *ácu* groups connected by *bódé* relationship. This type of residence group has been named as 'dyadic band' (Ichikawa 1978: 150ff.), and is common among the Mbuti. Five of the nine residence groups in Tetri 75, and one of the five in Andiri 78 were of dyadic composition.

The point of this dyadic group is that it makes it possible for men to stay with his *ácu* and *bódé* at the same time, and for the women of the sister-exchanged couples to live with the *ácu* of themselves as well as that of their husbands. Usually if a man chooses to stay with his *ácu*, he cannot live with his *bódé* and when a woman stay with her husband's *ácu*, she cannot live with her *ácu*. In relation to the children of sister-exchanged couples, they can stay with their *ádi* (matrilateral relatives) as well as their *ácu* at the same time. Such case is conspicuous if there were sister exchanges between the two *ácu* group in the upper generations. The Apekele-1 and Apekele-2 bands of Tetri 75 are the examples.

Ichikawa (1978: 151ff.) has given a marriage control function to the dyadic band, saying that it is the simplest structural model which ensures sister exchange marriage between the two patrilineal groups in the future. But the model would fail to function properly, because in that model the descendants of the sister-exchanged couples cannot find their spouses in that band in any way. Furthermore, I do not think the Mbuti have such a farsighted plan for the future. I think the matter is the reverse. The dyadic grouping is the result of sister exchange marriage. Establishing a dyadic group connected by sister-exchanged couples, the people can enjoy the special condition that they can stay with *ácu*, *bódé*, and *ádi* at the same time. In Andiri 78, seven of 30 married men (23%) were with their wives' brothers. In Tetri 75, 21 of 126 married men (17%) stayed with their wives' brothers.

3) *ádi*. This means mother's brothers in narrow sense, but usually it is extended to cover all of the mother's *ácu*, i.e. matrilateral relatives. The child of one's mother's brothers is *ádigáo* in accurate terminology, but in general called *ádi*. Like his mother, a Mbuti has a right to stay with his *ádi*. A Mbuti and his *ádi* have a strong affection to each other. *Ádi* are his guardians in a sense, who have a special right and duty to their *óngubalo* (sister's child). If they die, the *ádi* come and bury them, and in return receive special gifts from the *ácu* of the dead people.<sup>12)</sup>

The Mbuti cannot get married with those who belong to their *ádi*. When the mothers of two persons belong to the same *ácu*, they say that their mothers came from the same place, and they consider each other as a relative, and of course, they cannot get married. The matrilateral kin group works as a marriage control group as well as the patrilineal kin group.

In Andiri 78, only one of 39 family units (3%) stayed with *ádi*, while in Tetri 75, 27 of 130 units (21%) were with their *ádi*.

These three social relations connect the members of the residence group with one another. Among them the *ácu* relationship is most conspicuous and dominant, while other two categories play no little part in overlapping with it. The *ácu* relationship does the primary function in the composition of the residence group, but this does not lead to the solid patrilineal construction of the residence group. On the contrary, it has a basically flexible structure because of the following reasons. 1) The *ácu* group can include its female members as its co-residents even after their marriage. 2) As already mentioned, to stay

with one's *ácu* is a right but not a duty. This results in the dispersion of *ácu* group. 3) The kinship cognition of the Mbuti is fairly egocentric and the integration of *ácu* group as socio-residential unit through descent ideology is weak. 4) There exist two social relationships other than *ácu*, which work just like the *ácu* relationship entitling the Mbuti to live with affines or maternal relatives freely.

Considering these factors, we can understand that the composition structure of the Mbuti's residence group is intrinsically flexible.

## DISCUSSION: THE SEEMING APPLICABILITY OF THE PATRILOCAL BAND MODEL

I have shown so far the variation and the flexible composition structure of the Mbuti's residence group. Here we have to reconsider the patrilocal band model which once seemed to be applicable to it, from the view point of variability and flexibility.

From a theoretical viewpoint, the patrilocal band model is evidently not applicable to the Mbuti's residence group, because the Mbuti does not seem to have any rule, institution or ideology which forces the co-residence of its male members, and actually the members of a patrilineally related (*ácu*) group tend to be dispersed in several places. However, it is also the fact that there are many Mbuti residence groups which look like they are patrilocally and patrilineally constructed. Thus the question is; if there is not a patrilocal rule which brings about the co-residence of the members of a patrilineal group, why do male siblings tend to gather?

I have mentioned that it is quite natural for *ácu* groups to live together, since the *ácu* group is something like an extension of a family, so that it meets easily with the requirements of the co-residence, i.e. the cooperativeness of and generalized reciprocity among the members. But this *ácu* group can include their sisters as its fulltime co-residents. To make and to maintain a patrilocal and patrilineal band there must be a strong androcentric ideology which holds the male members within the group and lets out the female members. E. Service, who advocated the patrilocal band model slightly modifying the idea of Radcliffe-Brown's patrilineal horde and Steward's patrilineal band, proposed the importance of the "trusting cooperation among brothers and other closely linked male relatives" (Service 1971: 34) in wartime, suggesting this is the most important factor of virilocality in marriage. On the other hand, a woman is of no use in offense-defence, so that she "can be lost to her natal band without weakening it" (ibid. 35). Although it is true that hunter-gatherers sometimes experience antagonistic situations with other people or among themselves, Service's propositions such as hunter-gatherers' warlikeness in aboriginal times do not seem to be as easily generalized as he thought.

Ichikawa (1978: 183) assigned an intragroup political function to the male solidarity in the band in addition to Service's intergroup military function. According to Ichikawa each Mbuti family tends to behave in a self-centered way and it is a 'male bond' by which each family is integrated into a band (Ichikawa 1978: 178). This also runs into difficulty in generalization because the necessity of the integration of the band as such and the fear of its disintegration seem to be strongly related to the increase of commercialization of net-hunting and the related increase of 'hunting pressure' (Hart 1978), as well as the disorganization of the traditional symbiotic relationship with the farmers. On the other hand, Harako (1976: 90-1) pointed out that "the formation of a spear hunting group brings out a closer union of the paternal relatives." But this idea, too, would not be able to sustain itself in generalization, since all bands do not practice spear hunting in such a frequency as

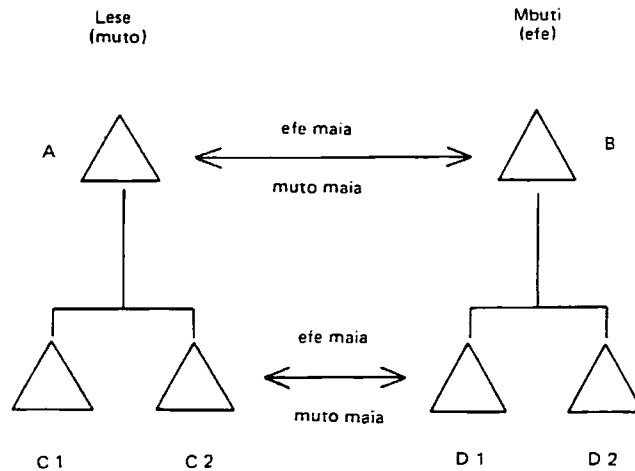


Fig. 4 The inheritance of symbiotic relationship.

B band of Lolwa studied by him did.

Generally African hunter-gatherers show bilateral and flexible tendency in kinship structure and residence organization. Lee (1979: 54ff.) illustrates !Kung Bushman camps as composed of core siblings of both sexes and their affines. While bilateral kinship and bilateral residence grouping seem to be most prevailing, Bushman society shows such a remarkable variability and flexibility described by Guenther (1985). Woodburn (1965, 1972) has given more flexible and variable picture of Hadza residential grouping, pointing out the importance of the man-wife-wife's mother triad relationship and their co-residence. The Aka pygmies of Central Africa studied by S. Bahuchet have bilateral residence grouping in general (Bahuchet 1979). The Bambote hunter-gatherers in a wooded savanna west of Lake Tanganyika also show quite a bilateral tendency (Terashima 1980). Thus the strong patrilocal tendency in the Mbuti is rather exceptional, and we would have faced a great problem if there were rigid patrilocality. But as mentioned earlier, co-residence with female siblings associated with their husbands is acknowledged quite positively by the Mbuti. There are some other traits of bilaterality in the Mbuti's social institutions, for instance marriage control grouping which is organized bilaterally. Thus it is not unreasonable to suppose that the Mbuti once had a more flexible and bilateral tendency, while it now tends to be largely patrilocal for some reasons, such as the necessity of integration suggested by Ichikawa and more likely, I think, by the influence of the symbiotic relationship with the farmers as will be discussed below.

The most important characteristic which is relevant here of the Mbuti-farmer symbiotic relationship is that it is a person-to-person relationship inherited from father to son on both sides. That is, in Fig. 4, if the farmer A is a partner of the Mbuti B, their children C1, C2 and D1, D2 become partners to each other. They express this intimate relationship as 'we have grown up together.' In Andiri they call each other as *efe maia* (my pygmy) and *muto maia* (my villager), and make a various kind of economic exchange in a way characterized by generalized reciprocity and familial treatment of each other. I have already mentioned the importance of economic exchange to the Mbuti. For the farmers, all of the goods and services provided by the Mbuti clearly help the farmers to live more

comfortably. Thus for the farmer A, it is desirable that a Mbuti together with the latter's children live near his residence and visit him frequently as long as the farmer has enough food to feed the Mbutis. The same thing is of course true for the Mbuti B and his children. The Mbuti can do economic exchange with the villagers other than their proper *muto maia* and they actually frequently do so in order to get what they cannot get from their proper partners. But at the same time the traditional *efe maia-muto maia* partnership based on a lifelong alliance and generalized reciprocity provides a Mbuti with emotional security as well as economic stability in his every day life. One of the Mbuti's subsistence strategies is to keep balance between the institutionalized Mbuti-farmer relationship represented by *efe maia-muto maia* relationship and uninstitutionalized trading with any farmers (Terashima 1985). Here we find another set of alternatives which the Mbuti have in order to make their subsistence stable, besides the set of alternatives, I mentioned earlier, i.e. foraging in the forest and working in and around the village. The farmers observe virilocal residence, so that it is convenient for the male siblings of the Mbuti to live together, as well as with their father, to keep the symbiotic relationship as long as it works well. But when they find that the living with their siblings or the symbiotic relationship with their *muto maia* becomes no longer comfortable or convenient, they freely leave from their *âcu* for the prospect of finding good other co-residents and village partners.

Some residence groups of the Mbuti are built up on a core patrilineally related group, which seem to correspond to the patrilocal band model. If we add several exceptional rules to the Service's model, such as the acceptance of uxormatrilocality or avunculocality, and the free leaving of the male members from the band, the patrilocal band model would explain the variation and composition of the Mbuti's residence group. But such exceptional rules certainly undermine the foundation of the patrilocal band model. Moreover, the point is that the patrilocality is just a matter of personal choice and not a rule or institution one must obey. The patrilocality which is simply based on a personal choice should be considered as a phenomenon which is only takes place in a certain socio-economic context.

Guenther (1985) has pointed out, reviewing recent Bushman studies, that the analysis of flexibility has been very narrow in spite of the fact that it is well acknowledged to be a central characteristic of foraging band society. We find the same situation in Mbuti studies. From a static band model based on a typical/atypical dichotomy, we have to change our attention to the dynamic flexibility of group arrangements, and the mechanism which creates the great wide range variation, such as from one family group to quite a large group, or from a fairly patrilocal-band-looking grouping like Tetri bands to a mixed, bilateral, or composite grouping like Epulu band. Neither of the two band models presented so far cannot be held in a wider, complicated and varying socio-economic context in which actual hunter-gatherers live.

## NOTES

- 1) The pygmies of the Ituri forest is called 'Mbuti' generally, and 'Efe' is particularly the pygmies who associate with the Lese people in north-eastern part of the forest.
- 2) Andiri is a small village of the Lese farmers, populated by some 200 Lese in October 1978, and at that time, there were about 125 Mbutis, or 38 households around Andiri village, living chiefly in five camps. The number of the people, however, changed day by day due to the entry and departure of people. Also the residence groups changed its membership more or less when they moved their camps from the vicinity of the village into the forest, and vice versa.



- 3) In order to avoid some confusion which could be caused by the vagueness of the concept of the band (Morris 1982), I use 'residence group'. The band is conceptually built up on the two factors, residence and social relations, but these two factors do not usually correspond to each other. Apart from the question whether we should exorcize the concept of 'band' (ibid.), we should treat separately the two aspects of the band for the time being in analysing the socio-ecological arrangements of the Mbuti.
- 4) This does not mean that the residence group is isolated from other groups. On the contrary, there is something to be called as local community in the Mbuti society, which consists of a number of neighboring residence groups. cf. Bahuchet (1979)'s description on the 'regional band' of the Aka pygmies in Central Africa.
- 5) Of course these numbers of families are rough criteria. To be more accurate, we have to consider the number of fully-fledged hunters.
- 6) For instance, the years of 1977 and 1978.
- 7) Here I treat only males for the simplification of description.
- 8) The corresponding terms in Kibira which the Tetri net-hunters use as their mother tongue are *banama*, *kiyo*, and *noko*, respectively.
- 9) Besides conjugal families (30 units), I include the units of widowers, bachelors, and fully-fledged young men who live independent of their parents. The widow units are excluded.
- 10) Those figures concerning the Tetri net-hunters are derived from their genealogical maps given by Ichikawa (1978: 148-52).
- 11) A man and his wife's sister, or a man and his brother's wife call each other *tóbú*. *Tóbú* is considered good as their spouses.
- 12) This custom is the same as what the Lese do in a funeral, so it probably has been strongly influenced by them.

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## Appendix. Kinship terminology of the Mbuti in Andiri.

Note: This terminology is almost the same as that of the Lese in Andiri.

